

Bright Successfully Adds Amendment to Cybersecurity Enhancement Bill

WASHINGTON, DC – Today, Congressman Bobby Bright successfully added an amendment to the Cybersecurity Enhancement Act, a bill designed to improve the nation's cybersecurity infrastructure. Congressman Bright's amendment will direct the National Academy of Sciences to study the role community colleges play in cybersecurity education. The amendment passed without opposition on a voice vote. The underlying legislation, H.R. 4061, is expected to pass tomorrow with strong bipartisan support.

"As the United States begins to address cybersecurity issues, it will become increasingly important that workers in the field adopt advanced job skills and technological savvy," Bright said. "Unfortunately, a high school diploma is often not enough to qualify for the jobs of tomorrow. Recognizing the need for additional education, workers often return to technical schools and community colleges to obtain advanced training.

"My amendment will serve to strengthen community colleges across the country," Bright continued. "As demand for a skilled cybersecurity workforce continues to rise, we must be ready to supply it. This amendment will ensure that community colleges will play a role in providing these personnel."

H.R. 4061 requires the National Science Foundation (NSF), National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), and other key federal agencies to develop, update and implement a strategic plan for federal cybersecurity research and development (R&D) activities. Additionally, the legislation formally authorizes the NSF Scholarship for Service program, which is designed to ensure a highly-qualified cybersecurity workforce in the federal government. The Cybersecurity Enhancement Act also sets forth mechanisms for public-private partnerships in cybersecurity research and development.

“The need for enhanced cybersecurity infrastructure was made even more evident following the State of the Union when numerous Congressional websites, including mine, were hacked by foreign actors,” Bright said. “Cybersecurity and national security go hand-in-hand, and this legislation provides some much needed updates and improvements to a constantly changing - and vital - field.”

You can view Congressman Bright’s floor speech [here](#).

A copy of the amendment is attached to this release: [Bright_Amendment_to_H.R._4061](#) His remarks, as prepared, are below.

I rise today in support of my amendment to the Cybersecurity Enhancement Act. Put simply, this amendment would require the National Academy of Sciences to conduct a study on the role of community colleges in cybersecurity education. It would also identify best practices related to cybersecurity education between community colleges and four-year educational institutions.

By now, we all recognize the need for the underlying legislation. It was made even more evident following the State of the Union last week when numerous Congressional websites, including mine, were hacked by foreign actors. Without a doubt, we need to improve our national cybersecurity infrastructure.

As the United States transitions into a future which addresses such cybersecurity issues, it will become increasingly important that we adopt advanced job skills and technological savvy. Unfortunately, a high school diploma is often not enough to qualify for the jobs of tomorrow. Recognizing the need for additional education, workers often return to technical schools and community colleges to obtain advanced training.

My amendment will serve to strengthen the community colleges that already play an important role in many of our districts. As demand for a skilled cybersecurity workforce continues to rise, we must be ready to supply it. This amendment will ensure that community colleges will play a role in providing these personnel.

This amendment is also consistent with the President's vision for promoting post-secondary education. In his State of the Union address to Congress last week, President Obama called for "every American to commit to at least one year or more of higher education or career training," and some of that training will happen in community college classrooms. This amendment could expand the options available in those classrooms across the country and make it easier for our constituents to commit to our shared goal of increased higher education.

As I put myself through school growing up, I began at Enterprise State Community College which is located in my district, so I understand the value of two-year institutions. My district alone is home to seven different community and technical colleges, and many members of Congress are committed to preserving and strengthening their role in our educational system. As we transition into 21st Century jobs, it is vital that we also provide the resources to our community colleges that would allow them to change with the times. This amendment achieves that goal.

Mr. Chairman, this amendment is simple and straightforward. It ensures a level playing field for community colleges wishing to offer educational opportunities in the cybersecurity field, and improves information sharing between two-year and four-year colleges. I urge its passage, and I reserve the balance of my time.